

**ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS:
News Release**

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**ALLIANCE FOR RETIRED AMERICANS
STRONGLY OPPOSES THE REPUBLICAN EFFORT
TO PRIVATIZE MEDICARE**

**A Statement by Edward F. Coyle,
Executive Director, Alliance for Retired Americans**

Washington, D.C.—The Alliance for Retired Americans categorically opposes the proposed Medicare bill being touted by Republican leaders on Capitol Hill. The Bush Administration and Congress are callously using a much needed and long awaited prescription drug benefit to privatize Medicare. Under the proposed bill, Medicare as we know it will cease to exist. They may say they are looking out for seniors, but they are really protecting the profits of the big pharmaceutical companies and insuring increased profits for the insurance industry.

Under the Republican plan, seniors will have to join a private health plan with higher premiums. Millions of retirees may lose their employer-provided health care. America's seniors will not be fooled by television ads, paid for by special interests, with actors asking Congress "when are you going to get it done?" Real seniors, and the Alliance represents three million of them around the nation, are not asking when are you going get it done but what are you going to do? Right now the answer they're getting from Congress is "we're going to raise your premiums, force you into HMOs and PPOs all while we do nothing to bring down the costs of prescription drugs." That is not the answer seniors have been waiting for. They are waiting for Congress to add a prescription drug benefit to the most effective, most successful, most efficient health insurance program in the nation—Medicare. They don't want to end Medicare but add prescription drugs to it. It's not about declaring political victory, it's about doing what's right for seniors. Seniors won't be fooled. They know a lemon when they see it, and the GOP is offering seniors a lemon of a bill.

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The Alliance for Retired Americans is a nationwide organization of more than 2.7 million union retirees, members of the former National Council of Senior Citizens and other older and retired Americans working together to make their voices heard in the laws, policies, politics and institutions that shape our lives.

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